

MR. BRYAN ON MEXICO

SOME OF THE ERRORS INTO WHICH THE NEBRASKAN HAS FALLEN.

WHY MEXICO IS PROSPEROUS.

IT IS NOT BECAUSE OF FREE SILVER, BUT IN SPITE OF IT.

Criticism by a Man Who Has Had Thirteen Years' Experience of Three Weeks' Residence in the Boy Orator's Arguments Answered.

Washington, Jan. 30.—Mr. Bryan's first public expression on his impressions of Mexico and her currency is sharply criticized by a number of people here who have had long practical experience in Mexico and upon her border. Mr. J. A. Smith, editor of the El Paso (Tex.) Daily Herald, one of the few newspapers of the South, who is now in Washington, criticizes a good many of Mr. Bryan's statements and conclusions, basing his criticism upon thirteen years' observation of affairs in Mexico.

"I cannot agree with Mr. Bryan's conclusions, at least," said he, "and I think he is mistaken in some of the assertions which he makes in his article published last Sunday in various newspapers throughout the country. I have read his article pretty carefully, paying particular attention to that part of it which treats of the effect of the silver standard upon the prosperity of the country. Residing upon the border for the past thirteen years, during five of which I was engaged in business with and exporting to that country, and two winters spent in the 'Tierra Caliente' has given me something of an insight to Mexico, and I feel able to judge, in a measure, of the conditions of which Mr. Bryan speaks and her causes."

Real Cause of Mexico's Prosperity.

"He tells us that, after comparison with other monetary systems of the world, Mexico is not willing to give up the silver standard, and mentions, as a minor cause, the true reason why Mexico is enjoying a fair degree of prosperity, which is her wise government, headed by President Diaz. But with all the prosperity that Mexico can boast of there is no advance in the standard of living in many parts of the United States since the adoption of the gold standard."

"Mexico's prosperity has been brought about by President Diaz in giving land concessions to promote railroads and manufacturing. Mr. Bryan may remember that the Republican party enacted some of this kind of legislation just after the civil war, and that his class of politicians told the people that the country was going to the demagogue because of it."

"Now he and others are crying to give us back those good old days when the country was able to reduce its tariff duty at a rapid rate and have a surplus, all brought about by parental legislation, which is bringing the same thing to Mexico today, although laboring under great disadvantages."

"Mexico, it is true, is on a silver basis, but not because, as Mr. Bryan says, she has measured the system by that of other nations. Mr. Bryan knows that Mexico has produced more silver than any other country in the world. He knows that she has exported that silver so closely that even at its present low price she has not lost a year's production of silver. He knows that she only coins about one-third of her production of this coin for the Oriental countries and not kept at home."

Why She Clings to Silver.

"He knows that she produces no gold, practically speaking; that she never attempted a double standard, and he ought to know that the low price of silver would cause a hardship in the way of exchange that she would go on a gold basis as soon as she could prepare for the change if she did not hope for the people of the United States through the agitation of Mr. Bryan and others, would adopt an enabling act which would give Mexico a chance to exchange silver, mined by cheap labor, for the many commodities they need from this country."

"He states in his opening sentence of the ninth proposition that the free coinage of silver is entirely satisfactory to the people of Mexico, and closes it by saying that they could adopt a gold standard if they desired to do so, and that no considerable number of them wish to abandon silver. Is it any wonder that they do not wish to take a step which would surely depreciate, to some extent, their greatest export product—silver? But let another score reach them like that of last August, and you will find that the 'no considerable number' will swell to embrace every tradesman and the entire commercial interests, and you will hear of Mexico negotiating for gold upon which to have a currency."

"The only advantage that Mr. Bryan claims for Mexico, on account of its silver standard, that could be applicable to any other country is that it works as a 'wall of protection,' and he acknowledges that Mexico is anxious to give up a standard of exchange which she would get with the United States if we should pass the 'enabling act' for her benefit, which he is asserting. The Mexican government is anxious to do so, but it is not because, as Mr. Bryan says, it is anxious to protect her manufacturers without doing so at a premium on exchange, and my observation is that she is not backward about such legislation, having already a high protective tariff, from which she draws the large revenue of which she speaks."

Some Arguments Answered.

"The argument that the coffee grower and others grow their crops upon a silver basis and market them for gold, fully met by the proposition that the people there want the United States to legislate their money and chief product (silver) to a par with our currency, which, great as our wealth is, could not prevent the withdrawal of our gold and silver and depreciation of our currency to the basis of that of Mexico, if Mr. Bryan and others are able to convince the people into passing a free coinage law at the rate of 16 to 1."

"Mr. Bryan's comparison of the wages of the independent labor of the two countries with the wages of the former slave states might have been followed by a description of the condition of the laboring classes of Mexico, who, while improved in the past quarter of a century, is still in such a state that thousands of them are coming to us annually, and figuratively speaking, are thriving on the crumbs which fall from the tables of our working people. His comparison of English-speaking people going to Mexico with those who go to Canada is no argument in favor of the Mexican money standard over that of our Northern neighbor, for we, with a gold standard, have been overrun with emigration of laboring classes, a considerable share of which are from Mexico."

"Did Mr. Bryan find an unskilled American laborer in Mexico? If he did, I will guarantee that he received a request from him for the price of a meal. The building and operating of railroads, manufacturing and other modern improvements has created a demand for skilled laborers, and if Mr. Bryan met any of them who had become Mexican citizens or otherwise identified themselves with the people, he would find that they expected to spend the rest of their lives there, the cases, I will

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